

April 9, 2014

Federal Communication Commission  
Wireless Competition Bureau  
Competition Policy Division  
Washington, DC 20554

RECEIVED

APR 18 2014

FCC-Competition Policy Division

Received & Inspected  
APR 16 2014  
FCC Mail Room

Re: 63.71 Application of SNET America Inc., d/b/a/ AT&T Long Distance East

To Whom It May Concern:

Ironically, the first piece of mail I opened on returning from a trip through the Grand Canyon was a notice from the Southern New England Telephone Company (SNET) thanking me for being a valued AT&T customer, and informing me that calling cards were being discontinued one month from now.

I say it is ironic because the only reliable means of communication available to anyone traversing the grand corridor trails in the Grand Canyon National Park are the few payphones maintained at the South Kaibab trailhead, the Phantom Ranch location in the base of the canyon, and the North Rim. Although cell service is spotty on the rims, there is absolutely no communication other than by payphone (or possibly the generally unavailable and expensive satellite phone) in the base of the canyon.

Discontinuance of the phone card service which most hikers and campers in these out-of-the way places depend on to keep families and friends informed of their whereabouts and safety will present a significant inconvenience and expense. It seems to me that the surcharge of 11 "phone units" extracted for the use of the cards from payphones would already support their continuance for those admittedly infrequent times when they are necessary.

Perhaps the discontinuation of the phone cards (which should also be done as a phased process) should be done in concert with demonstrably improved cell phone coverage. As it is, the nearly universal experience of "dropped calls" and "dead spaces" even in fairly suburban areas would suggest that the telephone companies should not be trimming their service options.



Please contact me with any questions – as I am no longer in the depths of the Grand Canyon, you may be able to reach me on my cell number below.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "D. M. B.", written over a light-colored background.

Marlborough, CT 06447